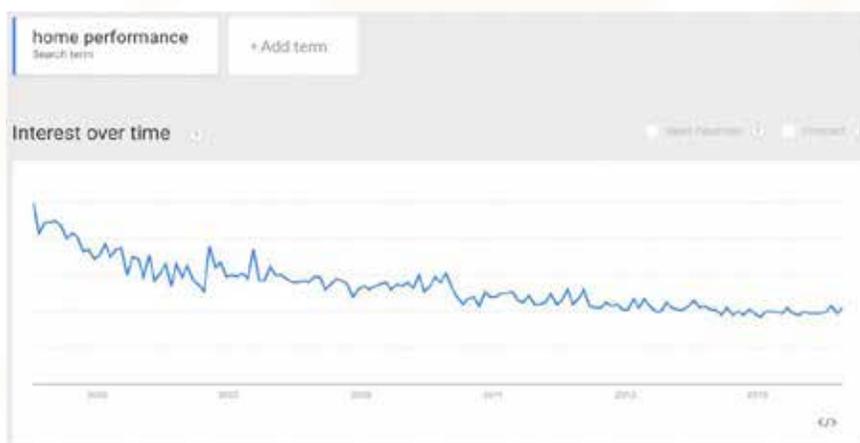




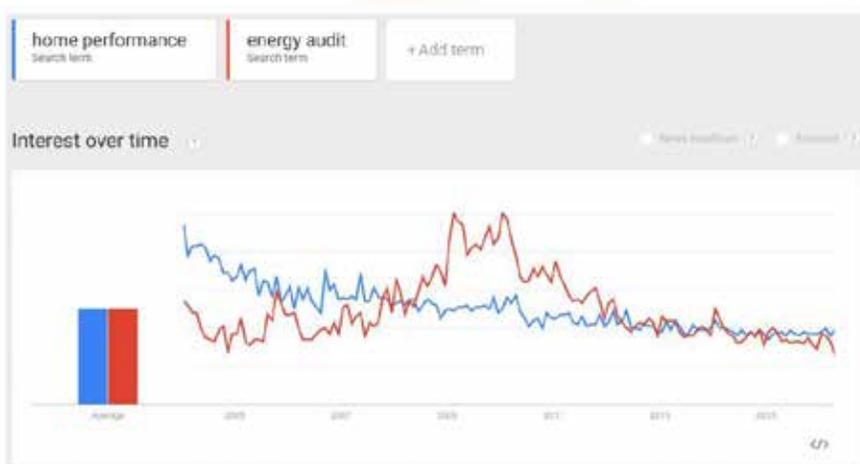
## 20 Search Terms In HVAC / Home Performance: Timelines & Trends

“Home performance.” “Furnace.” “Smart thermostat.” How have these search terms fared in Google over the last ten years? We did some digging to find out. Read on to find out what these trends tell us about customer education and your digital strategy.

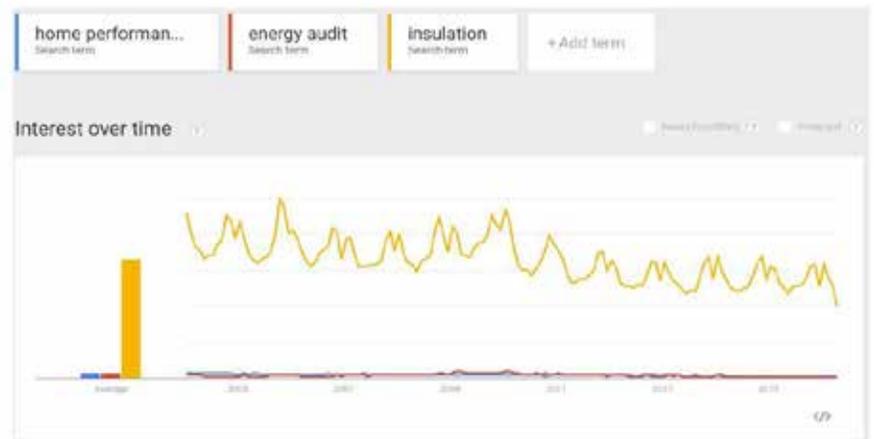
1. It’s no secret that many customers aren’t well educated on building science and home performance. The term itself is, unfortunately, often unfamiliar to homeowners. The search volume here demonstrates a dropoff in interest starting in 2005, with a steady line since about 2013.



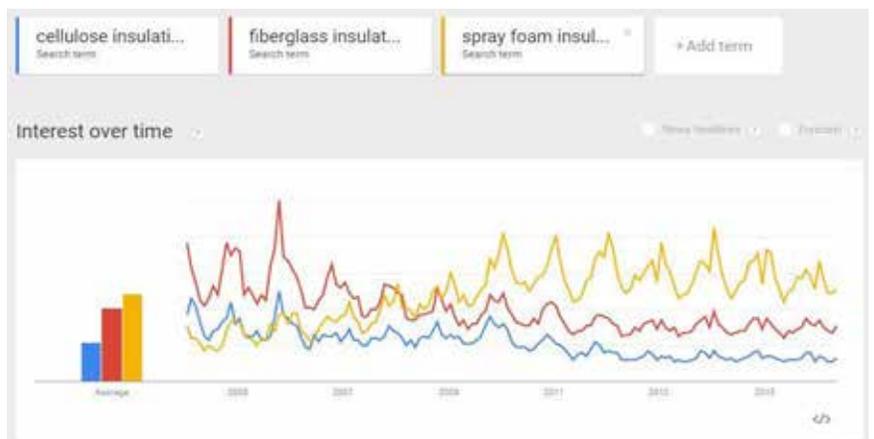
2. “Energy audit” experienced a significant spike in interest around 2009-2010, but search volume has declined over time. Consider using alternative terms like “energy assessment” and “home energy evaluation” to add diversity when discussing energy audits -- the variety is more likely to garner you more traffic.



3. Comparing home performance and energy audit terms to insulation, it's clear that the public is far more familiar with the latter. The big takeaway here? Make sure to use insulation keywords and pages on your website where applicable, and use them as a way to educate and inform the customer about the larger scope of home performance and related services.

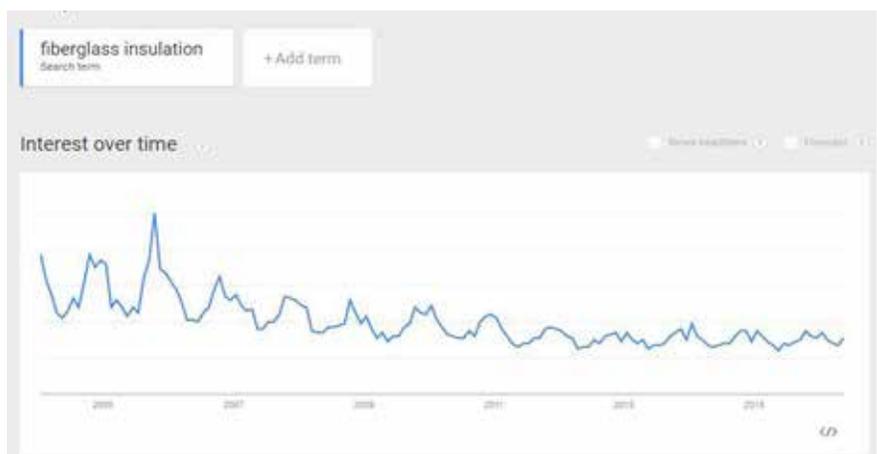


4. When comparing some of the most popular insulation types, it's very noticeable that interest peaks depending on the season; presumably, the terms are more popular in winter months than summer. While capitalizing on this popularity when temperatures drop is a good idea, it's also clear that customers need to be educated about the importance of insulation year-round.

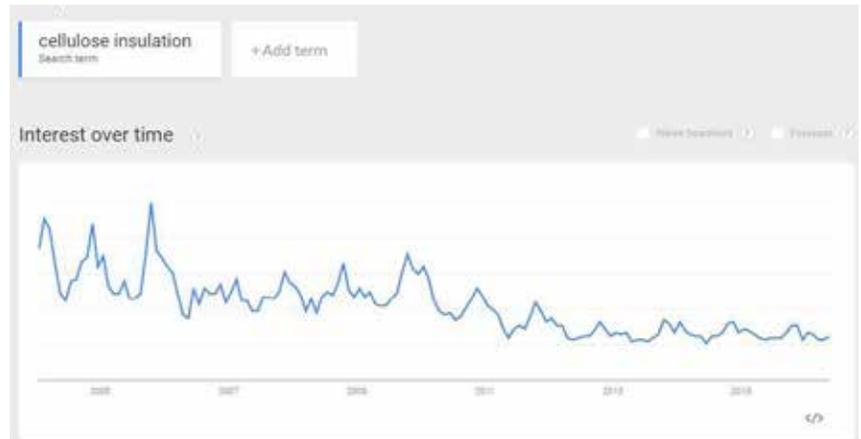


Let's take a look at each insulation type separately:

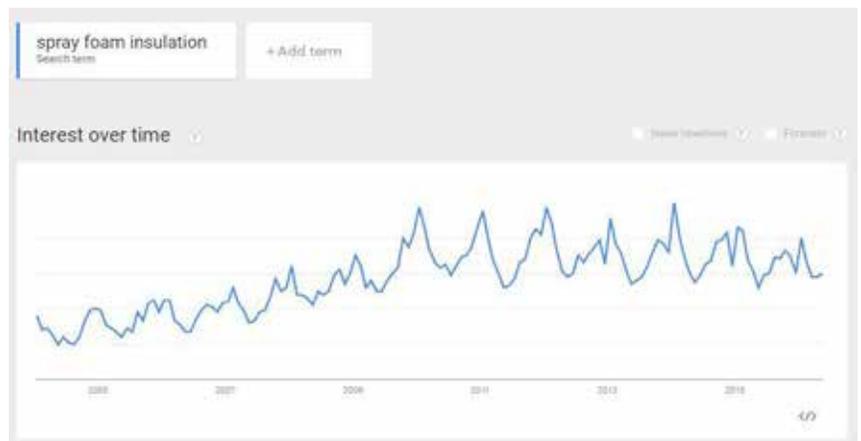
5. After a spike around 2006, the popularity in fiberglass insulation search volume has been decreasing and seems to have leveled out around 2013.



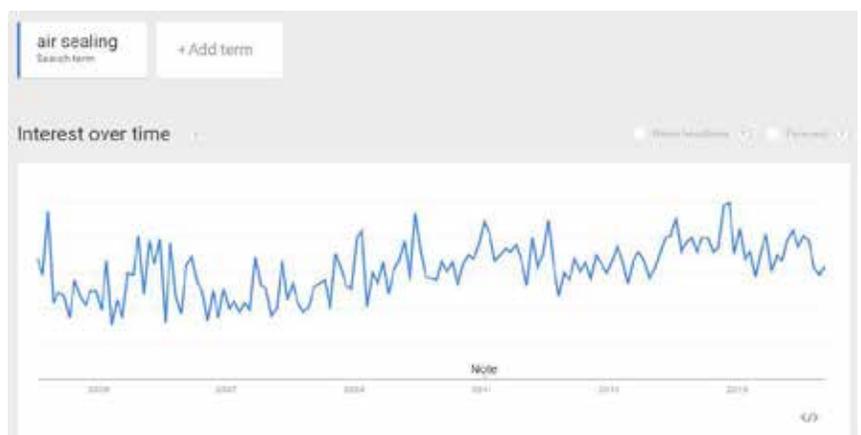
6. Similar to fiberglass, the popularity in cellulose insulation search volume has been decreasing since a spike around 2006 and leveled out around 2013.



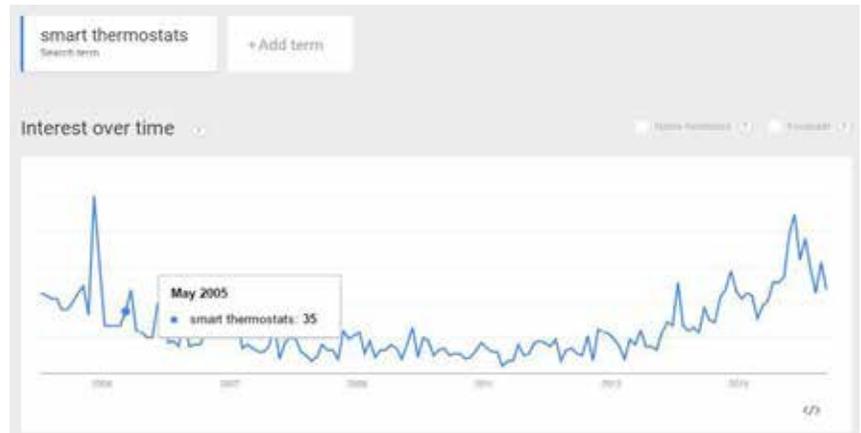
7. Unlike cellulose and fiberglass, spray foam search volume really picked up around 2010 -- it seems public awareness has been growing around this high-performance product. Among our clients, we see "spray foam" to be a continually high-performing term on paid ads.



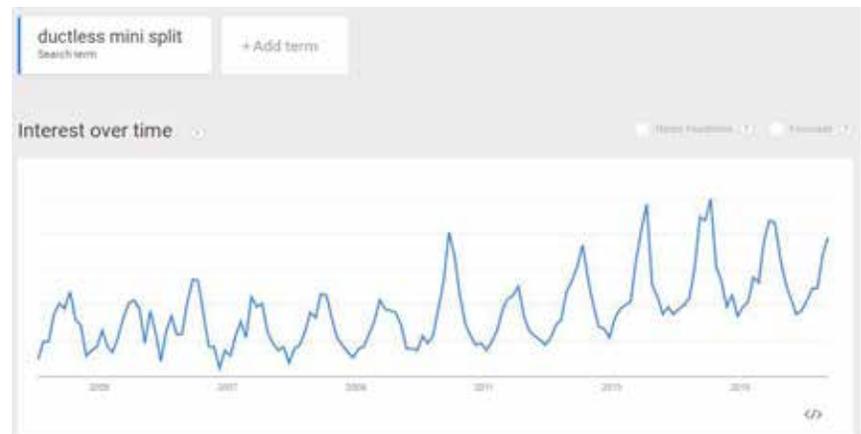
8. While the terms' popularity has perhaps more volatility than any of the other search terms we've included here, it's encouraging to see a somewhat steady increase in popularity since about 2012. Make sure your insulation-related pages mention air sealing and link to your air sealing pages, if that's a service you offer.



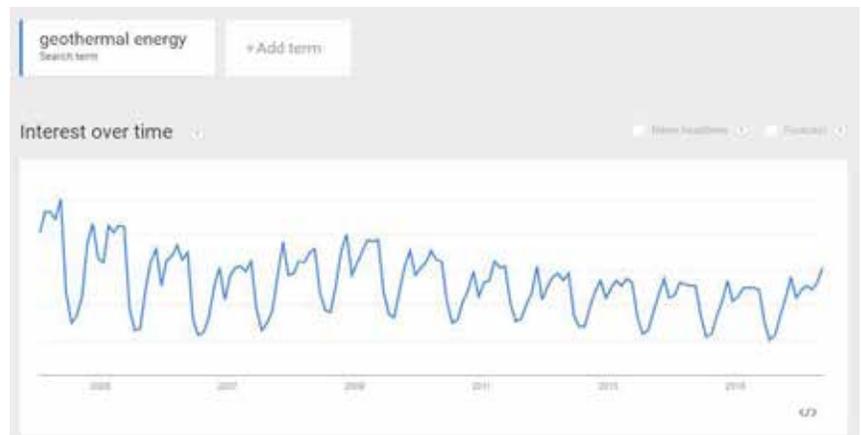
9. With the increasing proliferation of technology -- from wearable technology to Uber -- seeing a keyword related to the interconnected home rise in popularity isn't a huge surprise. The release of the NEST Thermostat in 2010 and the marketing hype around the product may have contributed to the recent jump in searches. The sharp spike and incremental drop in late 2015, however, is a bit cryptic. Perhaps there's an element of seasonality to the popularity of thermostats?



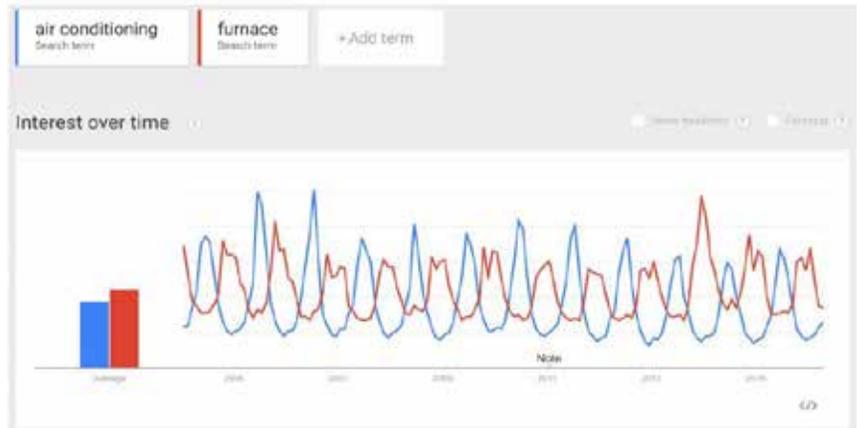
10. There is a strong summer seasonality to the interest in ductless mini splits, even more than insulation-related search terms. While it's clear that education around heat pump heating capabilities is lacking, it's encouraging to see an increase in search volume around the product.



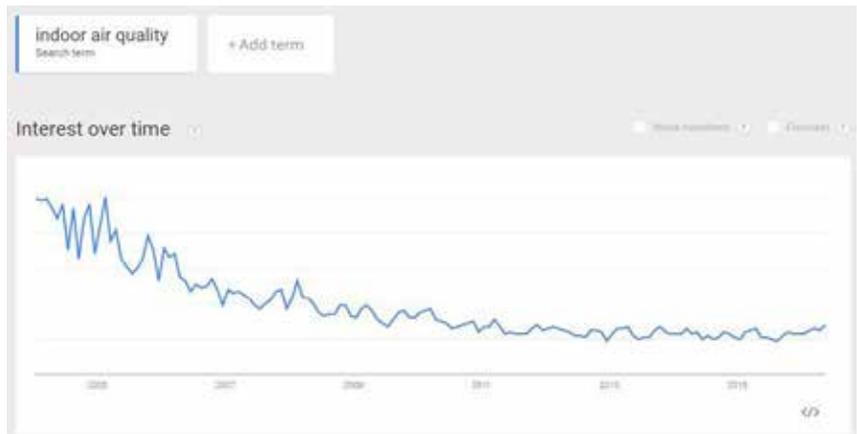
11. Again, seasonal popularity with search volume for geothermal is apparent. Geothermal seems to be on people's minds from winter into late spring; the drop-off is consistently happening in the dog days of summer. The popularity of geothermal energy search has been slowly decreasing, perhaps in part due to its reputation for steep initial costs.



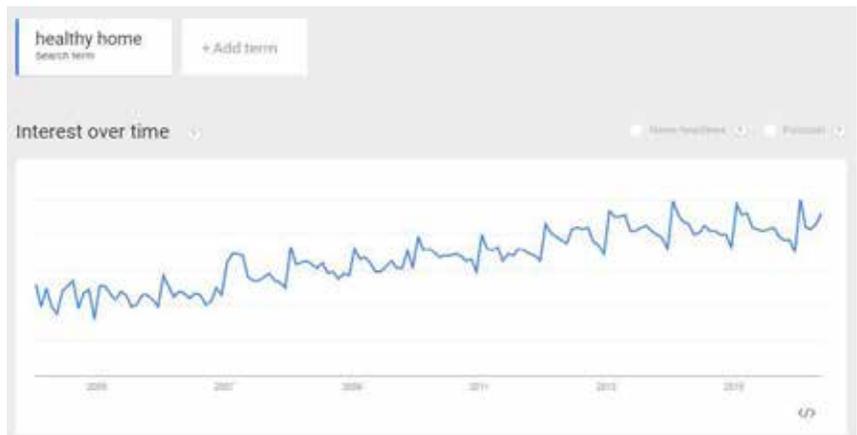
12. The opposite popularity of these two terms can be ascribed to seasonality: when it's cooling season, AC searches are high but furnace searches are low. Overall, the spikes in AC search is more pronounced, indicating there is perhaps more urgency and need for service when it comes to a really hot day than a really cold one.



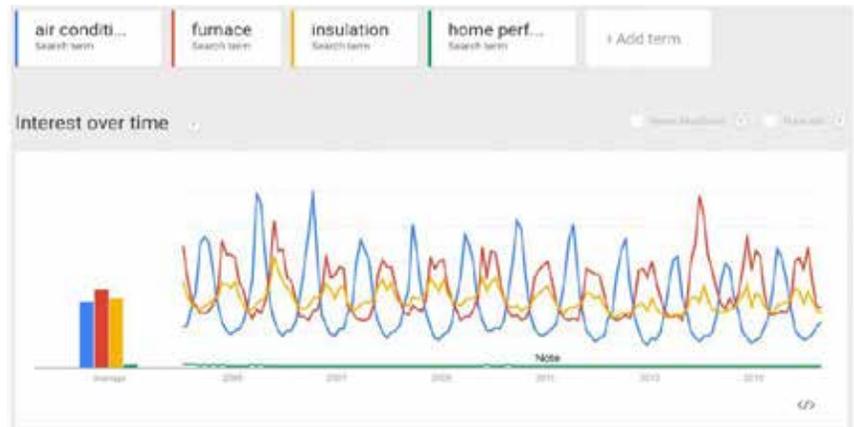
13. Search volume here is similar to home performance search data; a dropoff in interest started in 2005, with a steady line since around 2011. While customers may not be readily familiar with the term "indoor air quality," they are certainly familiar with pain points, like allergies in the home, asthma, etc. Make sure these are highlighted on your IAQ-related web pages.



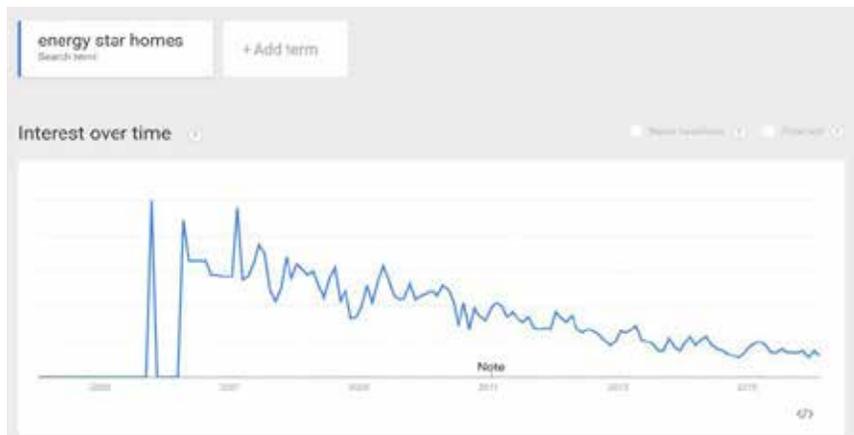
14. While IAQ may not be the highest-trafficked search word, customers do have a desire for a healthy home, and the data tells us that interest is growing (or, at the very least, there are more companies coming onto the scene that are naming themselves Healthy Home). The December dips, however, are a bit of a mystery. Could this be seasonal?



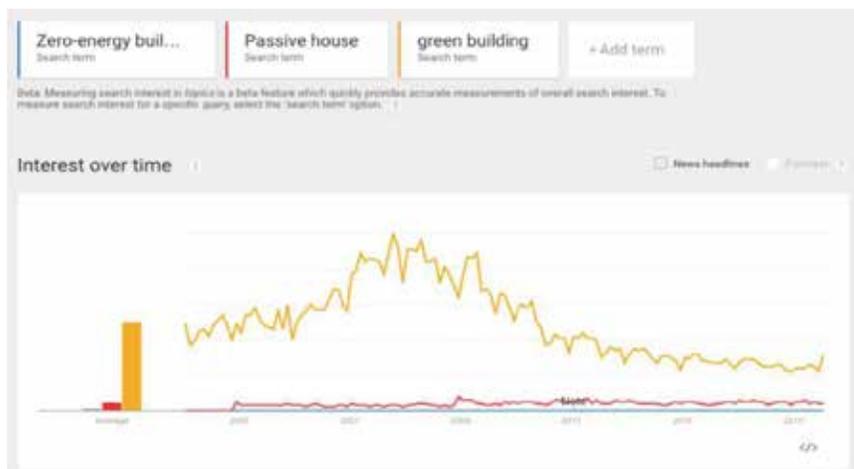
15. Notice the seasonal shifts and the relative low search volume around home performance. Make sure to prominently highlight your applicable services in high search seasons!



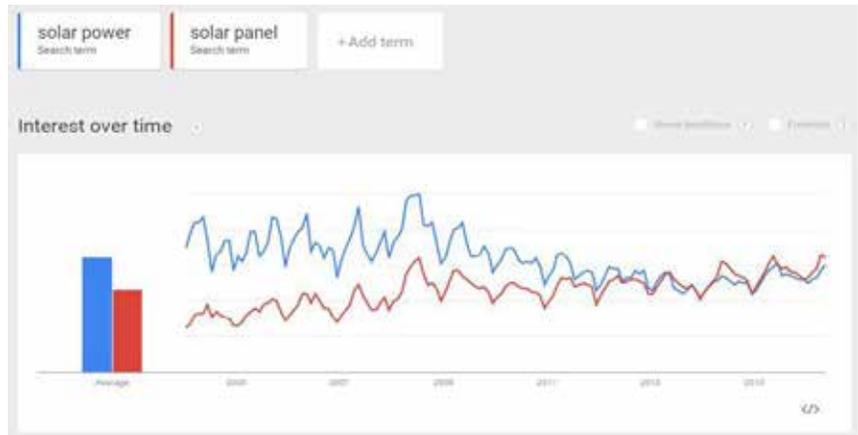
16. Ignoring the massive spike in late 2005 and apparently complete lack of data around 2006 (this looks like a Google Trend malfunction to us), ENERGY STAR homes search volume has been slowly tapering off in popularity. Make sure your customers know why this is an important distinction, if you offer services around it.



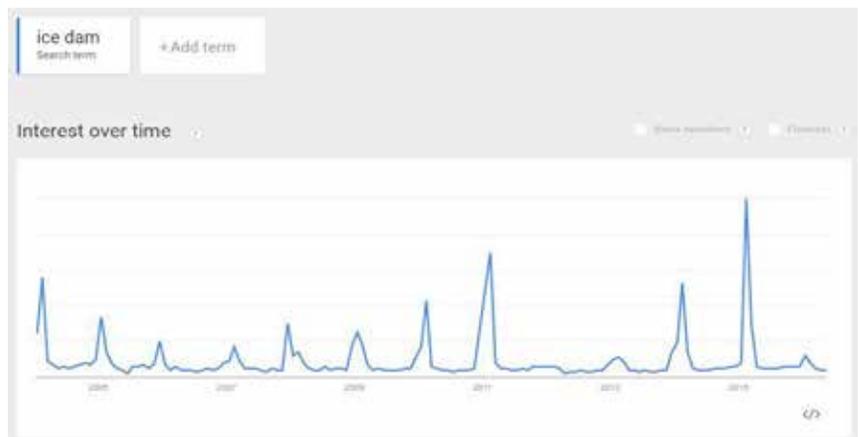
17. Green building is far and above a more popular term than either zero-energy building or passive house, yet interest seems to be leveling off after a spike around 2008-2009. Use a blend of these keywords when possible to capitalize on all that search juice!



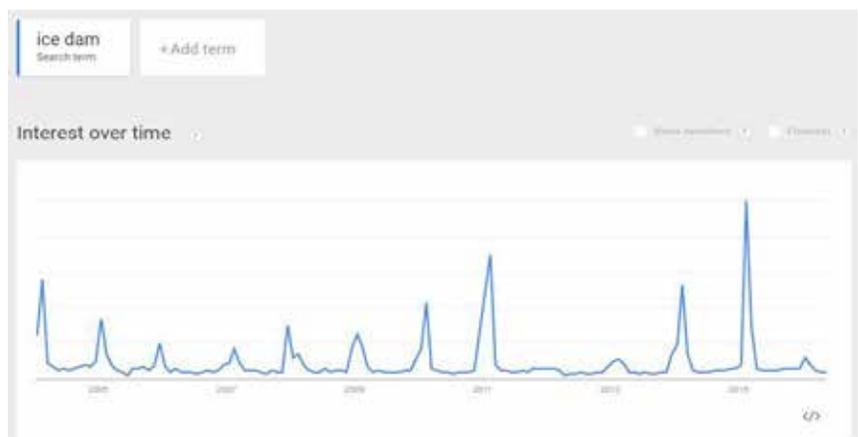
18. Solar is always a big, popular buzzword, and despite a decline in “solar power” around 2010, it’s apparent that interest is once again on the rise. “Solar panels” are increasingly popular, indicating a growing awareness of the components and mechanics of an actual PV system.



19. This is the most striking example of seasonal spikes out of all of the keywords we looked into. Looks like last winter was one of the most popular times for searching. Staying on top of weather forecasts around ice dam season could be a great way to know when to market your services!



20. It appears public opinion considers duct cleaning at least somewhat of a seasonal service, as is indicated by the peaks and valleys in search volume. In any case, this term has remained relatively steady in popularity since 2005.



Take this information and run with it! Diversify your search terms on your key service pages, capitalize on the seasonal popularity of those terms, and do some keyword research on your own for some of your other core services! Let us know what you find out.



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